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PROGRESS REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL ON THE UNITED NATIONS ANGOLA VERIFICATION MISSION (UNAVEM III)

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to paragraph 24 of Security Council resolution 1075 (1996) of 11 October 1996, in which the Council, inter alia, requested me to report by 1 December 1996 on the progress made towards consolidating the peace process in Angola. It provides an update to my report dated 19 November 1996 (S/1996/960) and also covers developments in the human rights, humanitarian and socio-economic areas since my earlier report of 4 October 1996 (S/1996/827). In addition, the report includes recommendations on the role the United Nations could continue to play in Angola, as well as plans for the downsizing of UNAVEM III's formed military units.

II. POLITICAL ASPECTS

2. With the support of the representatives of the three observer States (Portugal, the Russian Federation and the United States of America), my Special Representative, Mr. Alioune Blondin Beye, continued his consultations with the Angolan Government and the União Nacional para a Independência Total de Angola (UNITA) in order to ensure the timely implementation of the tasks enumerated in resolution 1075 (1996) and in the consolidated timetable approved by the Joint Commission.

3. On 21 November 1996, the Joint Commission reviewed the status of implementation of the tasks included in the consolidated timetable. The Commission took note of the efforts made by the parties to implement a number of these tasks, especially those related to military aspects, and urged both of them to exert additional efforts to fulfil all their commitments.

4. The Joint Commission will soon consider the proposals made by the Government and UNITA on the special status for the leader of the largest opposition party. It is hoped that the Government and UNITA will be able to reach an agreement on this important issue in conformity with the letter and spirit of the Lusaka Protocol. It is also hoped that the political tensions which emerged following the recent revision of the Constitution (see S/1996/960, para. 5) will not cause further delays in the peace process. In my message to

the Angolan people on the occasion of the second anniversary of the signing of the Lusaka Protocol on 20 November 1994, I stressed the imperative need to accelerate the pace of implementation of the provisions of the Protocol.

III. MILITARY ASPECTS AND GENERAL SECURITY SITUATION

5. Since my last report to the Security Council, the temporary upward trend in the number of ceasefire violations has gone into reverse. Among the contributing factors was the withdrawal of Government forces from several locations in Huila, Benguela, Bié and Lunda Sul provinces which they had taken over during the last two months. In the meantime, the transport of UNITA troops from Cabinda to a mainland quartering area was completed on 19 November 1996. However, the pulling back of Angolan Armed Forces (FAA) from two forward positions in the Lundas is still pending.

6. As of 28 November 1996, 69,093 UNITA troops had been registered in 15 quartering areas; 13,115 of these troops had subsequently deserted, and a total of 29,698 personal weapons and 4,521 crew-served weapons had been handed over by the quartered soldiers. Some 18,738 of the expected 26,300 UNITA troops had been selected for incorporation into FAA and the pace of this exercise has accelerated since the Government lifted strict age and education criteria for selection. In the meantime, demobilization resumed (still mostly of under-age soldiers), with 629 troops released from the quartering areas. After many months, however, most of the UNITA fighters still remain in the quartering areas, thereby placing an additional financial burden on the international community and depriving the country of much-needed resources for reconstruction. The protracted presence of these troops in the camps could also have serious repercussions on security. The Government has not yet initiated the actual incorporation of these UNITA troops into FAA, nor has it incorporated the nine UNITA generals who have been waiting in Luanda for over a month to join FAA.

7. After several weeks of procrastination, UNITA allowed UNAVEM III to remove weapons discovered in an arms cache in Negage, but the United Nations is still awaiting a declaration by UNITA that it has assembled all its troops and handed over all weapons. In the meantime, the dismantling of illegal checkpoints has proceeded, contributing considerably to the free circulation of people. However, approximately 77 checkpoints (many operated by the Government police) are still maintained throughout the country. UNITA also declared that it has phased out its regional command structures and this is now being verified by the United Nations. In sum, while considerable progress has recently been achieved on the military front, some of the tasks enumerated in resolution 1075 (1996) and in the consolidated timetable approved by the Joint Commission were not fulfilled by the 15 November deadline. It is now hoped that they will be completed by early December at the latest.

8. The security situation remains volatile in many parts of the country. In recent weeks, dozens of civilians have been attacked, often in highway ambushes, and killed by unidentified gunmen. Some of these crimes were perpetrated near assembly areas, and UNAVEM is conducting investigations to identify the culprits. On the positive side, there have been no major cases during the reporting period of harassment of UNAVEM personnel who, among other tasks, are

increasingly involved in the verification of areas recently vacated by UNITA forces. This is being done with a view to ensuring the orderly, gradual and peaceful transition of these areas to the State administration.

IV. POLICE AND HUMAN RIGHTS ASPECTS

9. As of 28 November 1996, 3,860 out of the expected 4,962 UNITA police personnel had been moved to quartering areas where they are being duly processed. So far, 2,345 different types of weapons and 3,550 rounds of ammunition have been surrendered. It is envisaged that the selection of UNITA personnel for incorporation into the Angolan National Police (ANP) and the rapid reaction police will begin simultaneously in all quartering areas immediately after completion of the registration of all the declared UNITA police. The recruited personnel will then undergo a three-month training programme. In the meantime, the selection of 212 UNITA personnel for training and induction into the ANP as bodyguards for UNITA leaders has been finalized.

10. After an interruption of several weeks, the disarming of the civilian population by the Government has resumed, and 99 crew-served weapons, 2,398 firearms of various types and 15,328 rounds of ammunition had been collected by 28 November. All the above activities have been extensively monitored and verified by the United Nations civilian police component.

11. At the same time, UNAVEM III has continued its public awareness campaign and other activities to promote respect for human rights. Some of these public education programmes were aimed at restoring confidence and dialogue between the representatives of the Government and UNITA at various levels and at fostering national reconciliation; one such programme was launched in Benguela Province in October. Similarly, with the assistance of Sweden, the Government began human rights training for selected personnel to serve in provincial institutions, as well as for civic education monitors in Bié, Menongue and Huíla provinces. These activities have often encouraged the local population to organize themselves into human rights committees, the most recent of which was set up in Uíge Province. As of 28 November, 57 allegations of human rights violations had been submitted to UNAVEM III and were investigated by its human rights and CIVPOL units. This important issue, together with those of governance, public accountability and capacity-building in the law and order field, deserve increased attention in the present phase of the peace process. I wish to express my appreciation to the European Union for its generous contribution of the services of human rights experts and, in particular, for the recent renewal of their contracts until February 1997. I very much hope that their services will be made available beyond that date.

V. HUMANITARIAN ASPECTS

A. Relief and rehabilitation

12. During the reporting period, United Nations humanitarian activities continued to concentrate on the expansion of programmes to newly accessible areas and on the return of internally displaced persons to their areas of

origin. Limited rehabilitation activities also continued throughout the country in order to encourage the return of the displaced and to assist local communities with the provision of basic services. Reports indicate that approximately 25,000 internally displaced persons have received assistance in returning home from non-governmental organizations (NGOs), the United Nations and the International Organization for Migration (IOM). However, military roadblocks, banditry and other impediments to the free circulation of people and goods continue to hamper humanitarian efforts and discourage the movement of displaced persons, particularly in Huambo, Huíla, Malange, Moxico and Uíge provinces. Over 1 million internally displaced persons, concentrated mainly in urban or peri-urban areas, will thus continue to rely on humanitarian assistance until conditions are established for their return.

13. The current distribution of seeds and tools by humanitarian organizations is now in its final stage and has benefited 530,570 families, with most of the materials having already been delivered at the village level. As a result of the efforts of the United Nations in the rehabilitation of roads and bridges and in demining, the World Food Programme (WFP) was able to deliver 85 per cent of the seeds by road, thus economizing on transport costs.

B. Mine clearance and road rehabilitation

14. Under the coordination of the United Nations Central Mine Action Office, the mine awareness campaign and mine survey and clearance throughout the country continued to be conducted by the Angolan demining brigades, which are trained and supported by UNAVEM III, the United Nations-contracted company MECHEM and specialized NGOs operating in nine provinces. Unfortunately, UNITA has not yet given its clearance for the demining of the Malange-Kuito road, which is the only major route in Angola still closed to traffic. Accidents resulting in serious injuries to deminers occurred during NGO demining operations in the localities of Caxito, Luena and Menongue. As a result, an international NGO ceased operations in Cunene Province, but two new international NGOs introduced plans for survey and demining operations in support of WFP in Bengo and Benguela provinces.

15. With support from UNAVEM III and the Humanitarian Assistance Coordination Unit, the Angolan National Institute for the Removal of Unexploded Ordnance (INAROE) has now established four regional headquarters and deployed six demining brigades, each with a strength of approximately 65 personnel. However, only three of the brigades are fully operational. Plans to deploy an additional two brigades by the end of 1996 have been postponed, owing primarily to a shortage of international supervisors and a lack of critical equipment. INAROE, with a trained workforce of over 350 deminers, is now the largest single demining organization in Angola, but it continues to rely on the United Nations for assistance in training and management and for logistic support. A two-year plan for the development of Angola's national demining capacity will commence in January 1997 under the auspices of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Department of Humanitarian Affairs. As part of this exercise, and pursuant to the recommendation contained in paragraph 22 of my report of 4 October 1996 (S/1996/827), UNAVEM III is considering the transfer of its demining equipment to the UNDP/Department of Humanitarian Affairs project. In

my next report, I will inform the Security Council of the details of this transition plan, as well as of the phase-out strategy for UNAVEM III military personnel who are currently involved in demining activities in this programme.

C. Assistance to quartering areas

16. United Nations agencies and NGOs continue to provide humanitarian assistance and civic training to some 54,000 UNITA troops still remaining in quartering areas and to more than 100,000 of their dependants in satellite camps. So far, over 200,000 medical examinations and follow-up treatments have been carried out among quartered soldiers. At the same time, special programmes to address severe malnutrition, trypanosomiasis and tuberculosis were conducted in those areas most affected by these diseases.

17. The duration of quartering well beyond the time-frame set out in the Lusaka Protocol poses a serious challenge to international humanitarian organizations and to the sustainability of the peace process. It is therefore imperative that demobilization commence in earnest and that the quartering areas be converted into demobilization centres under the responsibility of the Government of Angola.

D. Demobilization and reintegration

18. Approximately 100,000 ex-combatants from the Government and UNITA armed forces are expected to be demobilized. However, as indicated in paragraph 6 above, to date only several hundred under-age soldiers have been returned to their areas of origin. All received the necessary discharge documents as well as the demobilization benefits provided by the Government and the international community. However, serious difficulties arose as a result of repeated violations by UNITA officials of the soldiers' right to choose freely where they would be resettled. The irregular disbursement by the Government of the special subsidy for demobilized soldiers also impeded the smooth implementation of this exercise.

19. On 11 October 1996, in cooperation with the Humanitarian Assistance Coordinating Unit and United Nations agencies and programmes, UNAVEM III finalized a United Nations operational support plan for demobilization. In particular, the plan articulates UNAVEM III's exit strategy from the quartering and demobilization phases and envisages the Mission's involvement in recommending safe routeings for convoys carrying demobilized soldiers and their families. In special cases UNAVEM III military and police observers will accompany the convoys. However, the main responsibility for the safe transport of demobilized soldiers and their dependants lies with the Government.

20. Meanwhile, the Technical Ad Hoc Working Group of the Joint Commission for Demobilization and Reintegration is finalizing a plan of action for the demobilization of war-disabled soldiers and other personnel not eligible for induction into FAA. Through a UNDP-financed programme for the rehabilitation of former combatants, counselling and referral offices will be established in 13 provinces by the end of November 1996. Linked to this, quick-impact projects

for ex-soldiers are being developed with the assistance of national and international NGOs. While donors have already committed approximately US$ 10 million to such projects over the past six months, at least another $15 million will be required during the next year if adequate assistance is to be provided to all the ex-soldiers. In addition, a total of $19 million is needed to extend humanitarian activities in quartering areas until January 1997, when it is expected they will be converted into demobilization centres.

VI. SOCIO-ECONOMIC ASPECTS

21. During the reporting period, Angola continued to be confronted with severe economic conditions. The current economic situation is characterized by a near stagnant production sector (except for petroleum), continued infrastructural deterioration, a high budget deficit and an annual rate of inflation which exceeded 3,000 per cent. Excessive expansion of credit, leading to a massive growth in the money supply, and increasing commercial speculation are other hallmarks of the present state of the Angolan economy. Civil service wages and salaries remain very low. The rate of unemployment is currently estimated at 45 per cent, while over 60 per cent of the population subsists below the poverty level.

22. With the launching of the "Programa Nova Vida" (New Life Programme) in June 1996, the Government began to adopt urgent measures to address the fundamental causes of the deterioration of the economy. It has also been keen to enforce discipline and increase transparency in the management of State resources and to introduce new methods of management. Since June 1996, there has been a decline in the monthly rate of inflation, from 84 per cent in May 1996 to 5 per cent in September. The foreign exchange rate has remained stable for more than three months, which is a noteworthy achievement. Other major economic developments include the adoption of a Government decree to end the commercial banking operations of the Central Bank and the tightening of credit on private borrowing. Interest rates are being adjusted on a regular basis to compensate for inflation. The Government is currently undertaking only those expenditures which have been approved by the Cabinet within a revised and more realistic budget.

23. As a follow-up to the recent visit to Angola of the Managing Director of the International Monetary Fund, Mr. Michel Camdessus, a team from the Fund has arrived in Luanda and initiated a series of discussions with the Government in order to design economic reform programmes. An emergency programme for six months, supported by an emergency operation fund, is foreseen. This would be followed by a three-year structural adjustment programme which would be supported by a World Bank adjustment operation and be in synergy with the relief and rehabilitation activities of the United Nations system. The team will also work with the Government in preparing the 1997 budget with a view to reducing the budget deficit.

24. The Community Rehabilitation Programme (CRP), which was prepared with the assistance of UNDP, emphasized three key targets over the last quarter: institutional reinforcement, project identification and selection, and data collection and analysis. Within the framework of the UNDP capacity-building

programme, the CRP has placed key technicians and equipment in the Central Technical Support Unit in the Ministry of Planning in Luanda and the provincial directorates of planning in Huambo, Uíge, Malange and Benguela. In the meantime, numerous projects have already been identified for financing under the CRP, ranging from small educational programmes to community production centres. Two of the projects, Reintegration of Demobilized Soldiers and Vocational Training for Ex-Combatants, are being supported by UNDP as well as through Trust Fund contributions.

25. In an effort to coordinate various rehabilitation efforts, a comprehensive data collection project has been initiated. A report issued recently by UNDP provides information on nationwide donor interventions. The document discusses more than 30 projects at various stages of execution which are being supported by the development partners under the umbrella of the CRP and provides valuable information on financing mechanisms.

VII. FINANCIAL ASPECTS

26. Pursuant to General Assembly resolution 50/209 B of 7 June 1996, the revised budget for the maintenance of UNAVEM III for the period after 1 July 1996 (A/51/494/Add.1 and 2), which takes into account the withdrawal of four infantry and support units by the end of December 1996, has been submitted to the General Assembly for consideration at its current session. The reduced cost of maintaining UNAVEM III is now estimated at $25,452,733 gross ($24,953,130 net) per month beginning 1 January 1997. Should the Council decide to extend the mandate of UNAVEM III, as recommended in paragraph 34 below, the cost of maintaining the Mission during the extension period will be within the monthly rate indicated above, subject, of course, to the approval of the new budget by the General Assembly.

27. As at 25 November 1996, unpaid assessed contributions to the UNAVEM special account for the period since the inception of the Mission amounted to $138.8 million. At the same time, the total outstanding assessed contributions for all peacekeeping operations was $1,741.3 million.

VIII. OBSERVATIONS

28. The second anniversary of the signing of the Lusaka Protocol was commemorated on 20 November 1996. During the past two years, the country has lived in relative peace. Substantial progress has recently been made in carrying out the major tasks outlined in Security Council resolution 1075 (1996). Implementation of the Lusaka Protocol nevertheless continues to proceed in fits and starts, often only after increased pressure has been applied on the parties. This unsatisfactory state of affairs cannot continue, and in my report of 19 November (S/1996/960), I dealt with the most pressing tasks which must be completed without further delay.

29. It is certainly possible - and indeed it is imperative - for the parties to carry out all their obligations in the consolidated mediation timetable before the expiration of the present mandate of UNAVEM III on 11 December 1996. This

would enable my Special Representative to concentrate on resolving the key outstanding political issues. I therefore appeal to the Government and UNITA to resolve the issue of the return to Luanda of UNITA deputies to the National Assembly, to establish the Government of National Unity and Reconciliation, and to reach agreement on the special status of the leader of the largest opposition party before 1 January 1997. Further procrastination in resolving these issues may negatively affect both the peace process and the willingness of the international community to maintain its extensive involvement in Angola.

30. As of 28 November 1996, UNAVEM III had 7,003 military personnel of all ranks, including 341 military observers, deployed at over 70 locations throughout Angola. Six infantry battalions, as well as numerous military support units, have been stationed in six major areas of operation in Angola (see map). Their presence, together with that of the civilian police observers and other United Nations components, has had a positive effect on the military and political situation. However, I am also mindful of the financial burden that UNAVEM III, as the largest current United Nations peacekeeping operation, imposes on the Member States. The withdrawal of four UNAVEM III military, support and infantry units has therefore been initiated, and I intend, as we approach the end of the two-year period foreseen in resolution 976 (1995) for the completion of this operation, to plan for the gradual and progressive withdrawal of the Mission. At the same time, I am aware that several crucial tasks of the peace process are far from complete and that Angola will continue to need the stabilizing presence of United Nations forces.

31. Against this background, I recommend that the withdrawal of UNAVEM III military units resume in February 1997, with a view to a complete drawdown within a period of six to seven months. Having consulted my Special Representative, it is my intention to repatriate by mid-June 1997 four of the six UNAVEM III infantry battalions, together with additional support units and some military headquarters personnel, with the remainder of the formed units to be repatriated by the end of July or August 1997. At the same time, I believe that a rapid reaction force should be retained, comprising six company-sized infantry groups, one of which would be deployed in each of the operational regions of Angola until completion of the withdrawal of all military contingents, unless the political and security conditions permit a more expeditious drawdown. This rapid reaction force would provide a basic safety net to allow other United Nations components to function effectively and to help maintain the much-needed confidence between the Angolan parties.

32. Implementation of the overall plan for withdrawal of the formed units would also need to take account of the extent of completion of the most essential military tasks, such as the closure of the quartering areas, demobilization and effective integration and functioning of FAA and the police which, together with the extension of State administration, should gradually re-establish Government authority over the whole national territory.

33. In order to conclude the implementation of the tasks contained in the Lusaka Protocol and to consolidate the gains made so far in the peace process, a continued but substantially scaled-down presence of the United Nations in Angola will be required after February 1997. At the same time, the activities of the Mission will be increasingly concentrated on political, police and human rights

monitoring, vital humanitarian activities including demining, as well as public information programmes and logistic support to the whole Mission. I intend to elaborate on these tasks in my next report to the Security Council and to make recommendations on the mandate, structure and size of a follow-up United Nations presence after the withdrawal of the bulk of UNAVEM III's formed military units.

34. In the meantime, and having in mind the considerations presented above, I recommend that the present mandate of UNAVEM III be extended until 28 February 1997.

35. The demobilization of tens of thousands of troops and their reintegration into civilian society are among the most critical challenges under the Lusaka Protocol. As a result of continued delays in the demobilization phase, humanitarian assistance to quartered personnel will have to be provided for a much longer period than was initially expected. I appeal to donors to provide additional resources to support these vital tasks as well as the programmes for the subsequent demobilization of soldiers which are expected to gain momentum in the coming weeks. Rehabilitation of rural communities is also an important aspect of the overall peace effort. Significant resources are needed to assist the large number of refugees, displaced persons and former combatants in resettlement areas. To this end, I strongly urge the donor community to fulfil the pledges they undertook at the 1995 Brussels Round Table Conference.

36. Finally, I would like to pay tribute to my Special Representative, to all civilian, military and police staff of UNAVEM III, as well as to the personnel of United Nations humanitarian programmes and agencies and international NGOs for their remarkable dedication and unfailing efforts in support of the consolidation of the peace process in Angola.

UNAVEM III
Deployment as of 25 November 1996
HQ UNAVEM HQ
RHQ Regional HQ
Planned UNMO's and UNPO's
UNMO's and UNPO's
UNMO's only
UNPO's only
Each Regional HQ is co-located with: RUS and POR
CONGO
ZAIRE
ZAMBIA
NAMIBIA
BOTSWANA
Brazzaville
Kinshasa
LUANDA
Cabinda
Soyo
Sumba
Noqui
Maquela do Zombo
Quimbele
M'banza Congo
N'zeto
Uige
Negage
Bungo
Quibaxe
Caxito
N'dalatando
Caiomboloca
Malanje
Cafunfo
Lucamba
Catala
Muchinda
Lovua
Cuito
Dundo
Andrada
Camaxilo
Lucapa
Chiluage
SAURIMO
Cacolo
Quibala
Gungo
Mussende
Sumbe
Waku Kungo
Alto Hama
Londumbali
Balombo
Lobito
Benguela
HUAMBO
Andulo
N'harea
Kuito
LUENA
Lumeje
Luau
Caromba
Cuemba
Vila Nova Sambo
Chitembo
Soma Kuanza
Cubal
Chicuma
Chongoroi
Caconda
N'gove
Galague
Quilengues
Cacula
Matala
Kuvango
MENONGUE
LUBANGO
Namibe
Cuito Cuanavale
Lumbala N'gumbo
Mavinga
Caiundo
Xangongo
Ondjiva
Luau
Jamba
Mucusso
SOUTHERN REGION
EASTERN REGION
NORTHERN REGION
CENTRAL REGION
NORTH-EASTERN REGION
SOUTH-EASTERN REGION
International boundary
National capital
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